12 Week Essential Bodyweight Program

By Greg Brookes

The following workout plan is designed for those interested in improving their overall strength and movement skills as well as developing a regular exercise habit.

This program follows a logical progression plan that ensures you improve consistently over the 12 weeks without causing undue injury and also allowing time for your muscular and cardiovascular systems to improve.

The plan uses full body exercises that incorporate 100's of muscles at a time. These simple workouts will ensure you get maximum benefit for the short amount of time invested.

Remember that progress is made while you rest between workouts rather than when you are working out. So please stick to the one or two exercises per day layout. If you feel you need more then work harder during the workout but don't add any more exercises.

I have produced this plan with minimal graphics so you can print it out and then mark off each workout and fill in your progress.

Each exercise in the plan has a link that you can click to watch a video of that particular exercise so you will always know the correct form and technique.

Enjoy the workouts and even more so, the results!

A Word of Warning

Please consult with a medical professional before embarking on any of these workouts. If during any of these exercises you feel pain, then stop. Please listen to your body.

Neither I, Greg Brookes, nor GB Personal Training can be held responsible for any injuries that may occur due to you following these workouts. These workouts are suggested as a guide only.

Weeks 1 - 4

Objective

To develop full body movement skills and condition connective tissue. Focus should be placed on building an exercise habit and performing exercises with superb form and technique.

Workout Format

Exercises and workouts are kept extremely simple with a maximum of 2 exercises per workout.

Here's an example workout from Week 3:

Thursday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3		
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

So for this workout you will perform 5 - 20 Squats and then 3 - 20 Push Ups. Next rest for 60 - 120 seconds and repeat again for up to 3 sets (rounds).

Record how many Actual repetitions you achieve during each exercise and add 1-3 ticks in the tick box to signify how many sets you managed.

Remember the exercises should be challenging, complete as many as you can with good technique. As soon as you start to lose good form stop.

All exercises marked with an * mean that you should perform the desired number of repetitions on each side. So for lunges in Week 1 you will perform 5 - 12 on one side immediately followed by 5 - 12 on the other.

Monday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Back Extension		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Reverse Lunge *		5 - 12	1-3	60 - 120	

Thursday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Single Leg Dead Lift *		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Monday					>
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Back Extension		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Wednesday					•
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Reverse Lunge *		5 - 12	1-3	60 - 120	

Thursday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Single Leg Dead Lift *		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Monday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3		
Back Extension		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Reverse Lunge *		5 - 12	1-3		
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Single Leg Dead Lift *		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Thursday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3		
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Week 3 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Reverse Lunge *		5 - 12	1-3		
Back Extension		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Monday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3		
Back Extension		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Reverse Lunge *		5 - 12	1-3		
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Wednesday					•
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Single Leg Dead Lift *		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Thursday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		5 - 20	1-3		
Push Ups		3 - 20	1-3	60 - 120	

Week 4 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Reverse Lunge *		5 - 12	1-3		
Back Extension		3 - 10	1-3	60 - 120	

Weeks 5 - 8

Objective

To continue to add strength and movement skills while incorporating more Core focused exercises.

Sets

You will notice that during these next 4 weeks the number of Sets is increased to between 2 and 4. This means that you should perform a minimum of 2 rounds and a maximum of 4.

You may find that with some workouts you are bursting with energy and can manage 4 Sets and other times you can only manage 3 or 2. The key here is to listen to your body and adjust the Sets accordingly.

Don't forget to add a tick, in the tick box, for every Set you perform to help you keep track.

Rest Periods

The rest periods for Weeks 1 - 8 are set to a standard 60 - 120 seconds.

Your objective should always be to keep rest periods as low as possible as this ensures your heart rate remains elevated and will improve your cardiovascular health quicker.

Shorter rest periods are also recommended for quicker fat loss!

Monday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squat		5 - 20	2-4		
Side Plank *		30 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Forward Lunge *		5 - 15	2-4		
Slow Mountain Climbers		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
SLDL to Overhead *		5 - 10	2-4		
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squat		3 - 20	2-4		
Slow Mountain Climbers		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Week 5 Continued

Friday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Forward Lunge *		5 - 15	2-4		
Side Plank *		30 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Monday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squat		5 - 20	2-4		
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
SLDL to Overhead *		5 - 10	2-4		
Side Plank *		30 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Wednesday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Forward Lunge *		5 - 15	2-4		
Slow Mountain Climbers		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squat		5 - 20	2-4		
Side Plank *		30 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Week 6 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
SLDL to Overhead *		5 -10	2-4		
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Monday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squat		5 - 20	2-4		
Side Lunge *		3 - 10	2-4	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-4		
Side Plank *		45 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
SLDL to Overhead *		5 - 10	2-4		
Side Lunge *		3 - 10	2-4	60 - 120	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Slow Mountain Climbers		6 - 20	2-4		
Side Plank *		45 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Week 7 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Forward Lunge *		5 - 15	2-4		
Side Lunge *		3 - 10	2-4	60 - 120	

Monday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		5 - 20	2-4		
Side Plank *		45 Secs	2-4	60 - 120	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-4		
Slow Mountain Climbers		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squats *		5 - 20	2-4		
Side Lunge *		3 - 10	2-4	60 - 120	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		5 - 20	2-4		
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Week 8 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
SLDL to Overhead *		5 - 10	2-4		
Slow Mountain Climbers		6 - 20	2-4	60 - 120	

Week 8 Continued

Weeks 9 - 12

Objective

To add a more demanding Cardiovascular element to the workouts while still incorporating the movement pattern basics and Core strengthening.

Intervals

During these next 4 weeks you will notice that the demand on your heart and lungs is increased.

The workouts are now organised into intervals, meaning you will be working hard for 2 exercises and then resting. The resting time will allow for your heart rate to decrease before you repeat the workout again for up to 5 rounds.

At first you will find this type of training hard work, just stick to the workouts and build up your cardio gradually.

The objective is always to achieve the target time without stopping but if you find you only make it to 20 seconds instead of 30 then don't worry, try and improve on that time next time around.

Just ensure you keep track of your progress by filling in your actual times and adding ticks for the amount of Sets performed.

Interval Timer

You will find these workouts a lot easier to manage and far more motivating if you use an Interval Timer. You can set your Interval Timer to beep every 30 or 45 seconds so you don't need to keep looking at your watch or the clock.

I use a Gymboss Interval Timer.

Monday					>
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		30 Secs	2-5		
Fast Mountain Climbers		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Forward Lunges Alternating Leg		30 Secs	2-5		
<u>Skaters</u>		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Single Leg Dead Lift *		5 - 10	2-5		
Back Extensions		5 - 15	2-5	30 - 90	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Side Lunges *		30 Secs	2-5		
Fast Mountain Climbers		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Week 9 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		30 Secs	2-5		
Skaters		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Monday					>
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Side Lunge *		30 Secs	2-5		
Fast Mountain Climbers		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat		30 Secs	2-5		
Skaters		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Wednesday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Single Leg Dead Lift *		5 - 10	2-5		
Back Extensions		5 - 15	2-5	30 - 90	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		30 Secs	2-5		
Skaters		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Week 10 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Forward Lunge Alternating Leg		30 Secs	2-5		
Fast Mountain Climbers		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Monday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat Thrust		30 Secs	2-5		
Forward Lunges Alternating Leg		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		30 Secs	2-5		
High Knees		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Wednesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squats		5 - 20	2-5		
Dead Bug		6 - 20	2-5	30 - 90	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Fast Mountain Climbers		30 Secs	2-5		
Side Plank *		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Week 11 Continued

Friday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat Thrusts		30 Secs	2-5		
Back Extensions		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Monday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat Thrusts		30 Secs	2-5		
Dead Bug		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Tuesday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Push Ups		30 Secs	2-5		
Skaters		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Wednesday					/
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Yoga Squats		30 Secs	2-5		
High Knees		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Thursday					~
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Fast Mountain Climbers		30 Secs	2-5		
Back Extensions		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	

Week 12 Continued

Friday					>
Exercise	Actual	Target	Sets	Rest (secs)	
Squat Thrusts		30 Secs	2-5		
Side Lunges *		30 Secs	2-5	30 - 90	